



blue sucker

Cycleptus elongates

Kingdom:	Animalia
Division/Phylum:	Chordata - vertebrates
Class:	Osteichthyes
Order:	Cypriniformes
Family:	Catostomidae

Features

The blue sucker is a slender, dark-colored sucker with a small head and a long, sickle-shaped dorsal fin. The back and sides are blue-black or dark olive with brassy reflections. The belly is white and the fins are dusky or black. The small eyes are closer to the rear margin of the gill cover than to the tip of the snout. Breeding males are very dark and have small tubercles (bumps) over most of the head, body, and fins. The record blue sucker weighed 15 pounds.

Natural History

The blue sucker lives in deep, large rivers with a moderate to swift current over a bottom of gravel, sand, and rocks. It eats aquatic insects and their larvae, crustaceans, and plants. Little is known about the blue sucker's life history in Iowa. Sexual maturity occurs at age two or three. Upstream spawning migration into riffles occurs in late April to early May. Semi-adhesive eggs are broadcast over gravel and rubble bottoms directly in the current.

Habitats

interior rivers and streams; Mississippi River; Missouri River

Iowa Status

common; native

Iowa Range

eastern and western edges of Iowa

Bibliography

Iowa Department of Natural Resources. 2001.
Biodiversity of Iowa: Aquatic Habitats CD-ROM.